



# Recycle This! Newsletter

*Newsletter of the Maine State Planning Office, Waste Management & Recycling Program \* March 2006*

## Events Recycling – Possibly a Venue to Help Increase Recycling?



A few years ago, the Northeast Recycling Council applied for and received a grant from the US Department of Agriculture to work with event recycling in rural areas, including Maine's agricultural fairs. While it was known that some recycling takes place at our fairs, a quick survey identified the audience as a significant population.



With a fine network well-established and functioning beautifully, it seemed like a worthwhile area to invest or plan education as well as

actual recycling strategies. After working with a couple of fairs and getting to know many wonderful individuals associated with the events, it now seems that improvements could be made without the regional work but by encouraging communication between the municipal facilities, their operators, and any available committees with the fair organizers. The SPO would be more than willing to assist in such meetings.

At this winter's Maine Agricultural Fair Conference in Portland, the session attended by the treasurers and secretaries heard about the results of the waste audits and were encouraged to work with their local facility for improving recycling at the fairs. The congregated officers rose and left with a renewed enthusiasm. This may be the time for each community hosting an event or, especially an agricultural fair, to step forward and volunteer expertise and assistance.



## Augusta Highlight

The 122<sup>nd</sup> Legislature has been in session this first quarter building toward some results for our next issue. The Joint Standing Committee on Natural Resources has had about twelve bills that are identified roughly with Recycling and Solid Waste. Much of these have been looking at new hazardous waste planning, landfills, and recycling goals. This happens as the election race gears up a notch.



On the other side of the city in the Augusta Elks Club, the Solid Waste Management Policy Review Task Force met on three occasions to review and comment on the impacts of current solid waste policy and to make recommendations to support or change current policy. The Committee consisted of 23 individuals active in the Industry or in the policy setting arena and attracted many interested parties. The report from the task force will be presented to the Legislature this session.

## Blaine House Reception Is Official End to MRW 2005

The Blaine House again served as the setting for the last event of Maine Recycles Week 2005. With Mrs. Baldacci hosting the activities, the winners of the Maine Recycles Week 2005 poster competition and the managers of the state's four educational reusable resource centers met in Augusta to receive certificates of appreciation for their individual contributions to promote recycling and reuse, respectively. The afternoon of February 1, 2006, saw the weather cooperate and almost every guest show up to take part in the ceremonies.



The children shared their afternoon with the managers of the state's educational reusable resource centers. Mary Ryan of Everyone's Resource Depot in Farmington, Diane Doe of the SHARECenter in Auburn and Topsham, Ruth and Tom Libby of Ruth's Reusable Resources in Scarborough, and Diana Johnson of the Creative Resource Center in Portland gathered together for only about the third time in their long and distinguished history. For more information on the educational reusable resource centers, please refer to the front pages of your Maine Recycles Calendar.



From left to right: Diane Doe, Mary Ryan, Diana Johnson, and Tom and Ruth Libby.

## MRRA Offers Not Just another Conference

**WHO** - All Parties Interested in Talking ~~Trash~~ Recycling

**WHAT** – Annual MRRA Conference

**WHERE** – Samoset Resort, Rockland

**WHEN** - April 24 and 25, 2006

**WHY** – No one ever stops learning!

The annual MRRA conference returns to the Samoset Resort on April 24<sup>th</sup> in Camden/Rockport in 2006. It is hoped that more new people and perhaps more of the old that didn't venture to Bar Harbor's Atlantic Oaks last year may be lured to the resort. Before you fall for thinking; "Same Ol' Same Ol'!" though, take a good look in the mirror and straighten your "thinking cap". Ask yourself: What can I bring new to the conference? With 250 attendees making the same challenge of themselves and bringing at least one new idea, success story, or experience with them, all those in attendance can come away with the experience of a lifetime and energized enough to take recycling to new heights.



It is apparent from early planning that such sharing of ideas and experiences will be encouraged. A reception for everyone is planned at The Owls Head Transportation Museum. Such a setting could prompt tales of the recyclathon, but it also may make us wonder what we could do differently. The keynote speaker promises to bring ideas of how the Carolinas changed their idea of recycling and marketed their programs to new heights. Individual sessions will present new ways of looking at old materials or old individuals looking at new sessions. Take into account another pile of ideas swapped in a composting experience, and you may find yourself with a passport to success when you get back home.



## The ME E-Law

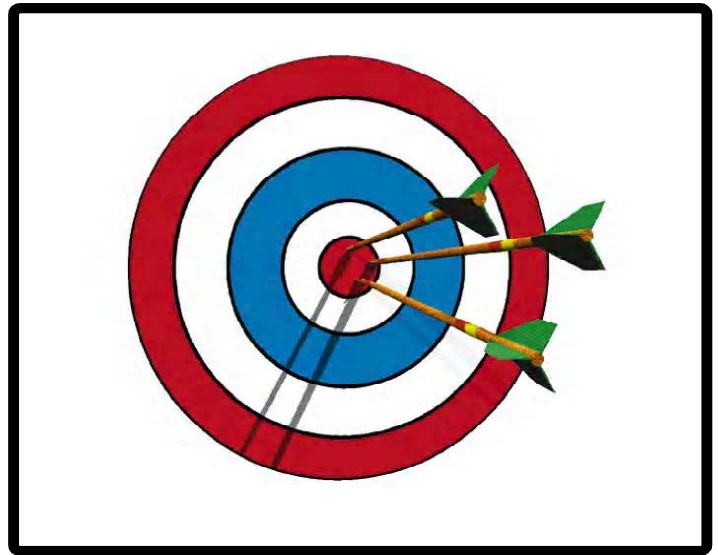
Benjamin Franklin perhaps didn't know what hit him when he took to making his infamous kite flying event three hundred years ago. Thomas Edison, Alexander Graham Bell, Karl Braun, Vladimir Kosma Zworykin, Alessandro Volta, and Peter Cooper Hewitt might all line up before the judge and prosecutor. These individuals would be cited for making life easier, and even of higher quality. They would be charged for not only filling leisure time through science but also contributing to creating the leisure time to be filled. With the best of intentions and the best known science of their day, they approached their problems much like Peter Cooper Hewitt did when he invented the mercury vapor light, which we now call the fluorescent lamp. You want light? Mercury in the right environment will glow with light. In the wrong environment, it will contribute to the destruction of the environment. From the first spark in 1752 to the first electronic law in 2003, we turned to law leaving modern civilization to wrestle with a problem.



The Maine Department of Environmental Protection has planned training sessions in Portland (March 21 & 23), Augusta (March 1), Bangor (March 28 & April 30), and Caribou (April 4). These workshops are recognized for the training program of transfer station operators. By the end of May, Maine's DEP will have not only completed delivering workshops, but will have presented informational meetings at association meetings and conferences and will have captured any and all opportunities to spread the word. Contact: Ann Pistell at 207-287-7703 or [Ann.Pistell@maine.gov](mailto:Ann.Pistell@maine.gov).



## Your Reports Are Due March 31, 2006



For each of the last fifteen years, Municipal Solid Waste Report forms have been distributed to the municipalities of the state requesting quantities and expense figures. The form changes color and there are often a few minor changes in the information requests to reflect changes in the Industry. Basically though, it is the same information and the same time frame. By the spring conference or maybe even before when the town meetings are posted, the requests for program data begin. While March and April meetings may push the processing and publishing schedule a bit, the new year's reports should be only caught up by the mechanics of accepting the data and not for still having not received accurate reports.

38 MRSA §2134 states: "The office shall make its technical reports and planning documents available to municipalities and regional associations on a timely basis". What would one call "timely" though? A municipality after having responded quickly and efficiently might reasonably expect to have some analysis during the year. The State may reasonably expect to be able to analyze statewide data by the end of the year. In other words, it is to everyone's benefit to submit reports on time and accurately. We remind everyone that reports are due by the end of March. If someone has questions they can reach Hank Tyler at (207) 287-1489 or [www.recyclemaine.com](http://www.recyclemaine.com).

# A Universal Waste Primer

As a way to educate the residents of Maine as to what items are banned from disposal, the State Planning Office is making available large aluminum signs for posting at all municipal and regional solid waste facilities. These signs will be distributed this spring at most of the DEP trainings and the Maine Resource Recovery Annual Conference (see last page for dates). Each sign will identify items banned by state laws 38 MRSA Chapters 13, 16, & 24.



## Televisions and Computer Monitors

On January 18th, 2006 manufacturers began paying for the recycling of all televisions and computer monitors generated by households in the state. Manufacturers have also begun covering transportation costs when loads exceed 16,000 lbs (approximately 23 pallets). Finally on July 20th, 2006, the disposal ban of household televisions and computer monitors will be completely in place. Municipalities are asked to offer residents one or more of the following five options to meet their new responsibilities for fulfilling the law:

- Residents deliver directly to nearby DEP-approved consolidator.
- Residents deliver directly to nearby regional solid waste recycling centers.
- On-going collection at transfer station or recycling center.
- Annual or semi-annual collection at a municipal facility.
- Curbside collection

## Mercury Added Items

Due to the high levels of mercury found in our environment and animals, emphasis for much of the last six years has been given to mercury added items. These include such things as thermometers; however they also include home thermostats and switches on appliances. Laptops and flat screens are also banned from disposal.

## Fluorescent Lamp Recycling

Few people refer to fluorescent lamps as mercury vapor; however the early reference is a dead give away for the dangers that are intrinsic with such lighting. While these lamps are energy efficient, they pose a serious problem to the waste stream. One of the scariest communications to the SPO was fielded in regards to Maine Recycles Week school competition, when a teacher described the fun of converting the long lamps into musical instruments. A rushed call stopped the practice and also informed the school of the availability of being visited and guided through valuable instruction by Maine's DEP. Storage and collection of these lamps are an important introduction to the recycling of universal waste at the municipal level.

## Batteries

One of the most frequently questions to the State Planning Office is still where and how can we recycle our batteries. Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation, RBRC, and other returnable services are pretty much everywhere throughout the state; however there still exists misunderstanding about rechargeable batteries and the more traditional alkaline batteries. Alkaline batteries may be disposed of in Maine's MSW. Rechargeable batteries from any source must be recycled.

## Car Batteries

When talking about battery chemistry, a distinction should be made. Car and truck batteries have been banned from disposal for over 15 years. Most conveniently taken in trade at a dealer they still are often delivered to municipal facilities, where they do pose a problem of their own related to their storage and handling.

For questions or more information, please contact: State Planning Office, Sam Morris, (207)287-8934  
Maine Department of Environmental Protection, Ann Pistell, (207) 287-7703.

## A Thousand Pictures Are Worth One Word - Recycle!

With so many great posters submitted each year (usually well over 1000) for the Maine Recycles Week poster competition, it raises the question of why more are not used for their purpose of promoting recycling. In the months and years ahead, we will display more of that artwork.

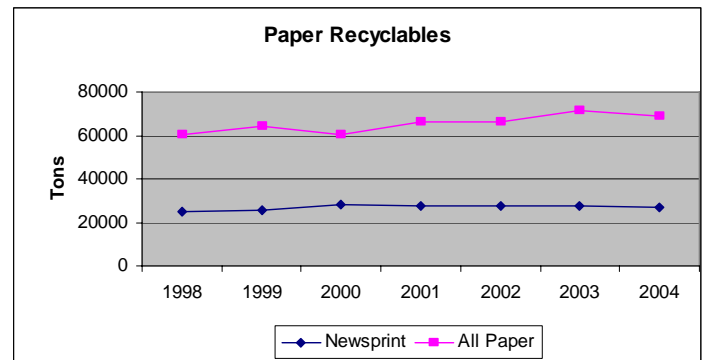
Pictured at right from top to bottom, the art work of: Noah Frost, James Doughtey School, Bangor; Sruthi Samali, Bangor High School; Elizabeth Farrell, James Doughtey School, Bangor.



## Take a Positive Spin on Electronics

According to the annual reports to the State Planning Office, the municipalities in Maine recycle about **27,000** tons of newsprint annually. This number is fairly steady, despite the perception that newspaper circulations have been on the decline for some time. There seems

to be decreases in circulation from news delivered now by computer or television. The waste stream could then be reduced significantly by the willingness of individuals to accept technology. How long or will electronic publishing be able to reduce the waste stream enough to help our waste stream, or will it only hurt our recycling efforts with such a manageable material?



## Turning a New Leaf in Bin Sales



For the second year in a row, MRRA has arranged for the supply of Compost bins for the communities in Maine. Their Bangor office will be taking orders through March for late spring delivery. This is a great opportunity to enhance local programs to promote composting to reduce the waste stream and to draw attention to municipal operations. This is available to any organization and any community in Maine as well as to MRRA members. You can obtain information for your own compost bin campaign by contacting the Maine Resource Recovery Association at: P.O. Box 1838, Bangor, Maine 04402-1838; (207) 942-6772.

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Before speculation is made, the SPO would like to ask one more time to have you consider receiving **Recycle This Newsletter** by electronic copy. The SPO newsletter is generally three sheets long. Considering our circulation, we are mailing about 20 pounds of paper per quarter. If we could reach a 50% reduction rate, we could realize significant savings. Please consider subscribing to **Recycle This Newsletter** by e-mail, and let's see if we can set an example for others. Contact Bruce White



[www.recyclemaine.com](http://www.recyclemaine.com)



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38 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0038  
1-800-662-4545 or 207-287-8934  
[www.recyclemaine.com](http://www.recyclemaine.com)

## Mark Your Calendar !

### ***Compost Bin Sale Orders Due***

Compost bin sale orders due on March 27th with payment to Maine Resource Recovery Association.  
Deliveries scheduled for the week of April 24th.

Contact: John Albertini at 207-942-6772 or [mrja.john@verizon.net](mailto:mrja.john@verizon.net)

### ***Earth Day 2006***

April 22nd (Some places may celebrate with environmental fairs on the weekend.)

Plan your support and celebration today!

### ***Maine Resource Recovery Association Annual Conference***

Samoset, Rockland, Maine

April 24 & 25

Contact MRRA at (207) 942-6772



### ***Maine DEP Universal Waste/E Waste Disposal Training***

Portland, DEP Southern Maine Regional Office, 312 Canco Road March 21 & 23

Bangor, Bangor Public Works Garage, 530 Maine Avenue, March 28 & April 3

Caribou, Northern Maine Development Commission, 11 West Presque Isle Road April 4

Contact Sandy Moody at (207) 287-7751 or [sandy.j.moody@maine.gov](mailto:sandy.j.moody@maine.gov)